**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE**

**RETIRED EMPLOYEES’ ASSOCIATION**

**July 21, 2022**

**6615 Arlington Expressway**

**Jacksonville, Florida**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER** – Eric Smith, President, at 10:07 AM.

**QUORUM** A quorum of Board Members was present.

**INVOCATION** GEPP PAC Member Kent Mathis gave an invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO AMERICAN FLAG**

**ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS**  The following officers and directors were present: Pres. Eric Smith, 1st Vice President John Keane, 2nd Vice President Cindy Gardner, Secretary Greg Radlinski, Treasurer Charlene West, Mbr-at-large Al Saffer, Mbr-at-large Larry Johnson, Past President Henry Cook, Past President Pete Ison, GEPP Pension Advisory Committeeman Kent Mathis, Police & Fire Pension Fund Advisory Committeeman Tom Lumpkin, and Advisory Panel Member Sheila Sharpe Caulkins.

The following officers and directors were absent: Chaplain Leona Spann (excused), Sergeant-at-Arms Darryl Patterson (excused), Mbr-at-large Lynette Clinch, Police & Fire Pension Fund Trustee Terry Wood (excused), GEPP Trustee Richard Wallace (excused), and Ombudsman Mary Ann Anders (excused) and Advisory Panel Members Flo Clark and Tom McGivney.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** The minutes of the June 16, 2022, Board Meeting were approved unanimously.

**SECRETARY’S REPORT** There was no correspondence.

**TREASURER’S REPORT** Treasurer Charlene West reported that the Association’s cash and investments amounted to $112,376.03, and that, since the last report, it had spent $5,910.34.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A.** 1st Vice President John Keane reported:

Legislative. REA continues working to have the City declare retirees eligible for financial relief under the American Recovery Act at least as a one-time COLA adjustment.

Financial. Mr. Keane recommended changing accounting professionals. The present, and long-serving accounting firm, has failed on at least two occasions to file tax returns in timely fashion resulting in one late fee which the REA paid, and a second late fee James & Harris paid.

Communications. At the BOD Retreat, a consensus was reached that communications are critical to the success of the Association. Accordingly, a computer consultant was engaged to upgrade and improve the Association’s website. The new website is partially finished and is accessible. When complete it will include links to government officials and services, other useful sites, and historical information.

**B.** 2nd Vice President Cindy Gardner reported:

Membership. As of June 16, there were 2,396 members of the Association. Since then, ten (10) members have left, either voluntarily or death. No new members have joined since the last report. Accordingly, there are 2,386 members. REA representatives are invited to attend pre-retirement seminars. At the most recent seminar, all retiring employees were given membership applications. Following last month’s BOD meeting, the City Pension Office has agreed to include a membership application in the packet the Pension Office gives to each retiring employee. The Pension Office will also send an REA membership application to surviving spouses of deceased retirees. The next pre-retirement seminar is October 12.

Social. The next social event is the September 18 BBQ that will be held in conjunction with the Quarterly meeting at the Firemen’s Hall. Doors open at 12:00 noon. The Quarterly Meeting will begin at 12:30 PM followed by food service at 1:00 PM. Members willing to help set up the Hall, serve the food, and clean up after the event are needed. President Smith discussed door prizes.

Insurance. Open season is getting closer. No new information on costs and coverage, but, when available, REA will disseminate it.

**C.** Pension Funds Reports:

1. General Employees’ Pension Plan. Pension Advisory Committee Member Kent Mathis reported that, as of May 31, 2022, the Fund balance was approximately $2.409B. For the year the balance is down 9.62%; however, over the last 3 years the Fund is up 7.45%, and over the last 5 years it is up 6.34%. Elections for Pension Advisory Committee members will be held in October. Any GEPP retiree interested in serving should begin preparing to file for election. PAC members serve 2-year terms. Mr. Mathis advised that the October meeting of the Florida Public Pension Trustee’s Association will be held in Orlando. In October 2023, the meeting will be Ponte Vedra.

2. Police and Fire Pension Fund. PFPF Advisory Committeeman Tom Lumpkin reported that, currently, the Pension Fund balance was $2.310B. PFPF hosts “affidavit signing” events, where PFPF retirees can annually confirm their continued entitlement to their pension. Fire retirees’ affidavit event is July 23 at the Firemen’s Hall. Police retirees’ event will be August 13 at the FOP.

**D.** Nominating Committee:

At the June Board Meeting, the President appointed a committee to nominate a slate of candidates for the 2023 Board of Directors. Committee Member Charlene West reported that the committee met on July 12 and nominated the current officers and directors for another term of service. The election will be held at the September 18 Quarterly Meeting. Nominations from the floor may be made.

**OLD BUSINESS** President Smith suggested the possibility of soliciting/purchasing prizes, such as gasoline debit cards, small appliances, etc., to be given away at the upcoming Quarterly Meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS** 1st VP Keane commended all who contributed to getting the improved Real Scoop distributed in timely fashion.

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT** President Smith appointed a committee to review the Association’s by-laws and recommend revisions. The **By-law Committee** consists of 1st Vice-President John Keane (chair), Member-at-Large Larry Johnson (vice chair), and Directors Tom Lumpkin and Pete Ison (members).

President Smith advised that, among the items to be posted on the Association website, with a list of accomplishments. Summarizing the accomplishments of 2022 so far, he highlighted: (a) continuing effort to get the City to grant retirees at least a one-time cost of living payment from the $171M the City received from the Federal “American Rescue Plan” intended to off-set financial impacts stemming from COVID 19. The President will talk with out-going Council President Sam Newby and in-coming Council President Terrence Freeman; (b) newsletter improvements. The Real Scoop has improved with more and better articles written and delivered to the printer to make timely delivery distribution which has not been the case for the past few years. The Association is searching for a different printer and more advertisers to help reach a goal of paying the expense of publication and distribution with ad revenue; (c) hosting enjoyable social functions featuring first quality food; (d) the Board’s Retreat, the first in 6 or 7 years; (e) the presence of the City Council President at the 2021 Christmas Party; (f) reinvigorated effort to increase membership; and (g) improving relations with the City Pension Office.

**COMMENTS** Secretary Radlinski asked the Board to consider returning to past practice by simply having a drawing for nominal cash awards at Quarterly Meetings and restrict giving away prizes to the Christmas Party. Past President Pete Ison agreed. President Smith stated that this meeting was not the time to put the matter to a vote of the Board of Directors.

**BENEDICTION** GEPP PAC Member Kent Mathisgave the benediction.

**ADJOURNMENT** There being no further business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 11:15AM.

**NEXT SCHEDULED** **MEETING** Will be on August 18, 2022, held at Patterson Funeral Home at 10:00 AM.

Greg Radlinski

Secretary